

**For Immediate Release**

**MFAH Kinder Foundation Gallery Presents *Teach Me to See*  
Exhibition runs July 3, 2010–January 9, 2011  
*Storytime Tours program fosters connection between looking and creating***

A child born today will see more images in a lifetime than the number of stars in the universe. But how do children learn the skills that will help them respond to the world around them with “thinking”—rather than “passive”—eyes?

The Kinder Foundation Gallery exhibition *Teach Me to See* presents works of art created by students from Presbyterian School and from Small Steps Nurturing Center. Both schools participated in MFAH Storytime Tours, a program of tours for children in pre-kindergarten to 2nd grade. The students participated in six one-hour guided tours of the museum designed to foster close and careful looking at works of art and to support classroom learning.



Describing the goals of the Storytime Tours program, Dr. Victoria Ramirez, W.T. and Louise J. Moran Education Director at the MFAH, said, “Our Storytime Tours program exemplifies the very best in bringing together early childhood education and the art museum. Bringing children to the museum at a young age and sharing the world of art with them using children’s books and activities is a comfortable and relevant way to introduce them to the joys of learning and discovery. This program also prepares young students for the future as they grow as thinking individuals and develop into thoughtful students who need to learn the skills of forming their own ideas through experience.”

The MFAH Storytime Tours program is based on the premise that for children as young as 4 years old, visiting the art museum supports their social and behavioral development. Furthermore, learning about and engaging with art helps develop the cognitive skills that allow children to relate the concepts they are learning in the classroom to the world outside of their school. As such, the program combines the reading of children’s literature in front of a work of art with discussion and other activities designed to help students understand and make sense of what they see. Activities include articulating what they see, using their senses to experience art, and imagining unseen details in a work of art followed by discussion and questions. Back at school, students create their own works of art inspired by their museum visits. For *Teach Me to See*, students were guided by art specialists Jacqueline Chaltain and Kaeli Holland.

Chaltain brought 2nd grade students from Presbyterian School to the museum to participate in the Storytime Tours program. The students each selected one of the paintings they had seen and created a work of art in response. Half of the student works are on view at the MFAH, and the other half are displayed in the administrative offices of Presbyterian School, located at 10 Oakdale Street, one block from the museum.

“My students did a marvelous job analyzing the characteristics of each artist’s style, even pointing out that Maurice Prendergast’s work shows crowds of people but John Singer Sargent’s work depicts small groups or just one or two people,” said Chaltain. “Controlling watercolor so that the colors did not bleed was a big challenge, but my students were determined to learn. I hope this project is only the beginning of their lifelong engagement with the arts.”



Holland brought her pre-K and kindergarten students from Small Steps Nurturing Center to the MFAH to participate in the Storytime Tours program. The students then created their own works of art using water-based paints and pre-cut shapes of clouds and boats.

“It’s really exciting to see the inventiveness of students even within the narrow parameters of an assignment,” said Holland. “One student decided his extra boat would become a sail ‘blowing in the wind.’ Another student used scraps placed under her boat as fish swimming under water. The paper becomes their playground; it’s like they’re swimming inside their own little water scene. For the younger students, this is a great way to begin experiencing mixed media and to apply the use of contrast not only with color, but with textures as well.”

The exhibition *Teach Me to See* showcases 21 works of art made by students at Presbyterian School and 29 works of art made by students from Small Steps Nurturing Center.

The Kinder Foundation Gallery is located at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, in the Caroline Wiess Law Building, 1001 Bissonnet at Main (free parking across the street).

### **The Kinder Foundation Education Center**

The Kinder Foundation Education Center (KFEC) is an innovative and dynamic part of the MFAH education department. As the hub for all interpretive resources and materials, it is the public’s main source of information about the museum’s collections of world art. The center’s resource materials enhance classroom curriculum in all subjects and bring the world of art to students and educators who often cannot visit a museum. In addition, the KFEC houses exhibition space for student art; serves as a support center for schools and universities; and offers resources in a variety of formats and disciplines—including DVDs, videos, curriculum kits, books, study guides, poster sets, and collection-based interpretive materials produced by the KFEC—to borrow free of charge through its lending library for educators.

### **The MFAH Education Department**

The education department of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH) complements the museum’s mission by making significant contributions to the evolving role of the arts in lifelong learning. The department provides people of all ages with access to a high-quality, enjoyable education in art and related fields. It delivers a wide range of innovative programs and creates a variety of resources that encourage children, students, adults, families, teachers, and scholars to engage with the museum and to use its resources to enhance both social development and academic study. More than 1 million guests participate annually to develop individual interests in art and to expand personal knowledge and talent.

### **The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston**

Founded in 1900, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, is the largest art museum in America south of Chicago, west of Washington, D.C., and east of Los Angeles. The encyclopedic collection of the MFAH numbers nearly 63,000 works and embraces the art of antiquity to the present. The MFAH collections are presented in six locations that make up the institutional complex. Together, these facilities provide a total of 300,000 square feet of space dedicated to the display of art. The MFAH comprises two major museum buildings: the Caroline Wiess Law Building, designed by Mies van der Rohe, and the Audrey Jones Beck Building, designed by Rafael Moneo; the Glassell School of Art; two house museums: Bayou Bend Collection and Gardens, which features American decorative arts, and Rienzi, which features European decorative arts; and the Lillie and Hugh Roy Cullen Sculpture Garden, created by Isamu Noguchi.

### **Media Information**

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### **Images**

(page 1) Avery Bennett, 2nd grade, *Untitled*, 2009, watercolor on paper.  
Presbyterian School  
Art Specialist: Jacqueline Chaltain  
Teacher: Kelly Gartner

(page 2) Justin Andrade, kindergarten, *Ships*, 2009, tempera paint and crayon.  
Small Steps Nurturing Center  
Art Specialist: Kaeli Holland  
Teachers: Doris Maynard and Teresa Torres